CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1.   A method of presenting information regarding products, suppliers and offerors
to users in a virtual shopping mall on a communications terminal, said
communications terminal having a user graphical display, a user input, and a
memory, said method comprising:

storing in said memory a set of mall data objects, said mall data objects
comprising a graphical map of a virtual shopping mall, said map having a
coordinate system associated with positions within the shopping mall, and a
plurality of multimedia data objects indexed to said coordinate system;

assigning a customer an initial position having a set of coordinates
within the shopping mall;

presenting at least one multimedia data object to a user indexed to said
initial position;

updating said initial position to a subsequent position responsive to a
position change command from a user via said user input; and

presenting at least one multimedia object to a user indexed to said
subsequent position.

2.   The method as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said steps of presenting a
multimedia data object comprise presenting a visual image of a mall or store
interior.

3.   The method as set forth in Claim 2 wherein said steps of presenting a visual

image of a mall or store interior further comprise the steps of:

    providing a customer-selectable hot spot within said visual image; and

    updating said customer's position responsive to selection of said hot

5   spot.

4.   The method as set forth in Claim 1 wherein said steps of presenting multimedia

data objects comprise presenting a sound clip representative of background

sound within a mall or store interior.

5.   A computer readable medium encoded with software for presenting

10   information regarding products, suppliers and offerors to users in a virtual

shopping mall on a communications terminal, said communications terminal

having a user graphical display, a user input, and a memory, said software

when executed by said communications terminal causing the communications

terminal to perform the following actions:

15   storing in said memory a set of mall data objects, said mall data objects

comprising a graphical map of a virtual shopping mall, said map having a

coordinate system associated with positions within the shopping mall, and a

plurality of multimedia data objects indexed to said coordinate system;

    providing a map of a virtual shopping mall, said map having a

20   coordinate system associated with positions within the shopping mall;

    assigning a customer an initial position having a set of coordinates

within the shopping mall;

presenting at least one multimedia data object to a customer indexed to

said initial position;

updating said initial position to a subsequent position responsive to a

position change command from a user received via said user input; and

5   presenting at least one multimedia data object to a customer indexed to

said subsequent position.

6.   The computer readable medium as set forth in Claim 5 wherein said software

for performing the action of presenting a multimedia data object comprises

software for presenting a visual image of a mall or store interior.

10   7.   The computer readable medium as set forth in Claim 6 wherein said software

for presenting a visual image of a mall or store interior further comprises

software for performing following actions:

providing a customer-selectable hot spot within said visual image; and

updating said customer's position responsive to selection of said hot

15   spot.

8.   The computer readable medium as set forth in Claim 5 wherein said software

for presenting a multimedia data object comprises software for presenting a

sound clip representative of background sound within a mall or store interior.

9.   A geographically-centered shopping mall browser for presenting information

20   regarding products, suppliers and offerors to users in a virtual shopping mall

using a communications terminal, said communications terminal having a user

graphical display, a processor , a user input, and a memory, said shopping mall

browser comprising:

      a set of mall data objects disposed in said memory, said mall data

objects comprising a graphical map of a virtual shopping mall, said map having

5   a coordinate system associated with positions within the shopping mall, and a

plurality of multimedia data objects indexed to said coordinate system;

      a mall map displayer for showing on said communications terminal

graphical display a geographical organization of a virtual mall contents;

      a customer position initializer for assigning an initial user position

10   having a set of coordinates within the virtual shopping mall;

      a position tracker for updating said initial position to a subsequent

position responsive to a position change command from a user via said user

input; and

      a multimedia data object presenter for presenting at least one

15   multimedia object to a customer indexed to said initial position or said

subsequent position.

10.   The shopping mall browser as set forth in Claim 9 wherein said multimedia

data object presenter is adapted to present a visual image of a mall or store

interior.

20 11.   The shopping mall browser as set forth in Claim 10 wherein said multimedia

data object presenter is further adapted to provide a customer-selectable hot

spot within said visual image and to update a customer position responsive to

selection of said hot spot.

12.   The shopping mall browser as set forth in Claim 9 wherein said multimedia

object data presenter is adapted to present a sound clip representative of

5   background sound within a mall or store interior.